

West Lafayette Fire Department July 2009

Independence Day None of the calls we responded to on the 4th of July were related to fireworks. I did, however, hear the police called to at least one report of people shooting roman candles and other fireworks at passing cars. That could quickly turn into a bad situation if one of those fireballs went through an open car window and started the interior on fire or if it startled the driver and caused a wreck.

Simulated Heart Attack WLFD, Tippecanoe Emergency Ambulance Service (TEAS), and St. Elizabeth Hospital participated in a national research study conducted by Western Michigan University and the American College of Cardiology Foundation. An actor mimicked symptoms of a heart attack (acute myocardial infarction) and treatment of this “patient” was video taped and reviewed from the initial treatment through his continued treatment during the first several hours in the hospital.

We responded as normal with an engine and three on-duty firefighters. WLFD received high marks and praise for our part of the treatment process. The reviewers had no criticism of our treatment and reported that it exceeded levels they had seen in other parts of the country. Likewise TEAS and St. Elizabeth received high review marks.

Sunset Lane Fire We did received one complaint during this fire from a neighbor who lives several houses away. She felt compelled to inform us that our fire hoses blocking the street were an inconvenience to her. I was pleased to hear that our firefighters she spoke with kept an even temperament and simply continued doing their job.

When the fire call came in, station 1 was already on a medical call so station 2 was first on the fire scene, arriving in less than 3 minutes. As Engine 2 was crossing Lindberg Road they reported that they could see smoke. About that time our dispatchers reported that the fire was spreading from the detached garage to the house. Engine 2 arrived and found the fire spreading into the attic of the house. They initiated the fire attack and Engines 3 and 1 arrived shortly thereafter. The fire spread was essentially stopped right where it was when we arrived.

A neighbor reported that embers landed in dead branch on one of his trees and that it was catching fire. We assembled a makeshift lumberjack crew who took a chainsaw off one of our engines and cut the branch down eliminating that potential problem. There were several helpful neighbors and the Red Cross was quickly on the scene helping both us and the residents. The family living in the house is an asset to the community and took the time to send a thank you card to the fire department that reads:

“Thank you for the wonderful job you did Tuesday night putting out the fire at our home. We appreciate your quick response and hard work. We feel fortunate to live in this community.”

Chief Drew